

## A Castle In Spain.

By JUSTICE  
MILES FORMAN.

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SIBBES showed me into the red drawing room, the little one, because there was a fire there, and said that Lady Ellnor would be down soon. I found Sibyl and the Persian cat informally occupying the hearth rug. The cat moved away with a distrustful backward glance, but Sibyl, abandoning for a moment a huge and misshapen lump of something which would seem to have been toffee, gave me a very sticky hand.

"I'd offer you some toffee," said she, in a tone of reckless generosity, "but I'm afraid I've licked it all over."

"Oh, not any, thanks," said I hastily, "not that I should object to your having—er, licked it; but you see I'd just had a large quantity of it before coming here. I—I'm very apt to stop in at a shop and eat toffee," I concluded wildly.

Sibyl gave a sigh of all too obvious relief—though mingled with sadness.

"I don't have it often," she suggested; "not so very often."

"You shall have it every day," I cried; "pounds of it! The idea of not allowing you all the toffee you want! It's barbarous."

Sibyl wagged a melancholy head.

"I'm not allowed half enough," she declared. "This—this morning I stole some from Ellnor—only it wasn't toffee, it was chocolate. It hurts yet," she grieved, stirring about uneasily upon the hearth rug.

"Oh," said I, leaning forward sympathetically, "tummy?"

"That's not where I'm smacked," said Sibyl, with dignity. There was a painful silence for quite a minute or two. The Persian cat, having reconnoitered from the middle distance, at last returned and sat down with an absent air upon the lump of toffee, but was indignantly pushed away by the proprietor of the same.

"Why did the cat go away, Sib, when I came in?" I inquired.

"Flossie Bray—I mean, Lord Brayton—was here this afternoon," said Sibyl significantly.

"The devil!" said I. "I would say, the deuce!" I apologized.

"Oh, you needn't mind me," declared Sibyl. "Dad uses—language, sometimes—quite often. He called me a little devil the other day."

"No!" I cried in a shocked tone. "He couldn't have, really?"

"He did," insisted Sibyl.

"I don't want to seem curious," said I in a deprecatory way, "but—but what had you been doing, Sib?"

"Just sailing boats in his bath," said Sibyl. "And—and one of them sank to the bottom, and I expect I forgot to take it out. Dad must have sat down in the bath the very first thing" she continued reflectively.

"Oh," said I. "I think I understand. Of course that was some provocation, wasn't it? But we're leaving our mutt—s—mean our Lord Brayton. I take it he's not fond of cats."

"He tried to kick Frou Frou," cried Sibyl resentfully. "I paid him, though. I did things to his hat."

"Good old Sib!" said I.

"I'd much rather Ellnor would marry you than Flossie Brayton," observed Sibyl, attacking the toffee.

"Thank you, Sib," said I gratefully. "So would I—I've told her so no end of times."

"He was kissing her hand today," continued Sibyl with disgust. "That was when he tried to kick Frou Frou, just because Frou Frou rubbed up against his legs in a perfectly friendly way."

"Kissing her hand, was he?" I growled. "The beast! Kissing her—Sibyl, my dear, I can't allow you to tell me—family secrets. You know it's not proper. Really it isn't."

"Rot!" said Sibyl elegantly. "And he put a ring on it, too—her hand, you know. What would he be doing that for? She wouldn't let him kiss her, though. She said: 'Not yet. Give me a little!'"

"Sibyl!" said I firmly, "that is enough. I mustn't listen to you. Ellnor—Lady Ellnor wouldn't like it at all. Ah, Sib, Sib, it's a bitter world! I can't see any good in it."

"What can't you see any good in?" inquired Lady Ellnor from the doorway.

I rose and made a bow.

"I can't see any good," said I, "in not giving Sib all the sweets she wants. Cutting her off that way only leads to immorality."

Lady Ellnor shook her head.

"It's very bad for Sibyl's tummy," said she.

"Her tummy?" I inquired. "Why, I should have said it was rather— But a gentleman never betrays a confidence, and I held my peace."

Lady Ellnor sat down in the big chair before the fire and leaned forward with her elbows upon her knees. I tried to catch a glimpse of her left hand, but it was hidden in the folds of her gown.

"Sib, darling," said she presently, "your hands are very, very shocking. Don't you want to go and have them washed as a special favor to me?"

Sibyl swallowed the last of the toffee and departed with the Persian cat under one arm.

"I told him that Flossie Brayton tried to kick Frou Frou," she said from

the doorway.

"Ah," cried Lady Ellnor, looking up at me very quickly, "so Sib told you?"

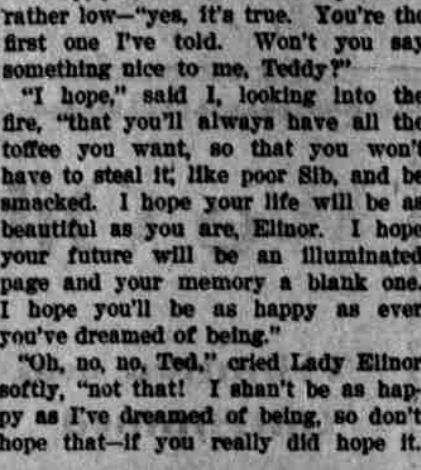
"Yes," said I. "Yes, Sib said that—that Brayton had been here today. Ah, is it true—is it true, Ellnor?"

Lady Ellnor raised her left hand from the folds of her skirt, and the ring was there on the third finger, a ruby between two diamonds. It looked like Brayton, just the showy sort of thing Brayton would choose.

"Why, yes, Teddy," said Lady Ellnor, rather low—"yes, it's true. You're the first one I've told. Won't you say something nice to me, Teddy?"

"I hope," said I, looking into the fire, "that you'll always have all the toffee you want, so that you won't have to steal it, like poor Sib, and be smacked. I hope your life will be as beautiful as you are, Ellnor. I hope your future will be an illuminated page and your memory a blank one. I hope you'll be as happy as ever you've dreamed of being."

"Oh, no, no, Ted," cried Lady Ellnor softly, "not that! I shan't be as happy as I've dreamed of being, so don't hope that—if you really did hope it."



"I told him that Flossie Brayton tried to kick Frou Frou."

As happy as I've dreamed of being! Ah, rather not! You don't know what a girl dreams, Teddy. You're nothing but a man, you see."

"Oh, I've had my dreams," said I, "and cherished them somewhat. It appears I must forget them, or try to. No, I don't fancy you will be as happy as you've dreamed. It's a pity."

"Yes," sighed Lady Ellnor. "Ah, yes, it's a pity! Still, dreams never come true, do they, Teddy?"

"I've heard that theory advanced," said I, "but I don't recollect ever to have seen it proved."

"Why, if they could come true," said Ellnor in a half whisper, "if they could—"

"You wouldn't be wearing that very handsome ring," I suggested.

"No," said Lady Ellnor, "I shouldn't be doing what they all want me to do—what they all expect me to do."

"All?" I objected.

Lady Ellnor turned her head with a little sweet half smile, and I took a firm hold upon the arms of my chair.

"All," she murmured—"all, Ted, but one—one very foolish and—and very dear dissenter, who's dear for his great, great folly and foolishness because—why, because he's such a dear."

"But whose opinion is of no weight," said I.

"Whose opinion," said Lady Ellnor, "must be of no weight, must be erased with—the other—dear things to make that memory page blank."

"Ah, that memory page!" said I.

"It's the sweetest of all the pages," she murmured, "the very sweetest."

"If only it needn't be erased," said I.

"Erased it must be," declared Lady Ellnor firmly. "Oh, Teddy, Teddy, weren't they good old days, those days? How did we ever come to stray out of paradise, Teddy, after we'd gone so far in? Is there a little masked gate in the wall that we opened by chance, that we thought would lead us still farther in? Were we too busy looking at each other to see where our feet were turned?"

"We didn't stray out," said I, with my head in my hands. "We were chucked out—by the main gate. Ask your mother how, Ellnor."

But Lady Ellnor was looking into the fire with a little faraway smile, and her face, with the soft red glow thrown up across it, was the most beautiful thing a man ever saw.

"Of course we were only children," she cried softly, "but such dear children, Ted. Why mayn't people be children always? Why must they grow up?"

"They needn't grow up," said I. "Why must they be taught wisdom?" demanded Ellnor. "Why mayn't they be left in their belief that love is the only thing?"

"Love is the only thing, Ellnor," said I. "Wisdom's a lie. Love is the only thing."

Lady Ellnor shook her head.

"The wise people say so, Teddy," she murmured. "They tell me that love is all dreams, castles in Spain, and that there's no happiness in Spain."

"I should make you happier than ever Brayton will," said I bitterly. It was a contemptible thing to say, for she was wearing Brayton's ring.

Ellnor gave a little, low, gasping cry, and her eyes closed for an instant.

"He tried to kiss me—today!" she

whispered presently.

"Ah, yes, yes, Ted, you would make me happier. Is happiness all, Teddy?"

"Upon my faith," said I.

"They say not," said Ellnor. "Oh, I should—I shall become used to—"

Brayton after—after awhile. He's a good sort, Ted. He loves me, I think, and—and he has a great deal of money. I shall be a power, shan't I?"

"Is that enough?" said I.

"It isn't what I'd dreamed, Ted," she said. "I'd dreamed—oh, such a life! No power, Teddy; no great position—just happiness! Just two young, foolish, dear people, who loved each other madly, worshiped each other—just their life together, a selfish life, I suppose, for no one else came into it at all. There were just the two of—of them, and nothing else counted in the least. They never grew up, you know, my two people; they wouldn't let each other grow up. They were infants, always, about most things. Oh, weren't they dear! I'd dreamed all sorts of beautiful little particulars, details about them—my people in Spain! What they'd do and what they'd say and how they'd act toward each other; how they'd sit before the fire of a nasty day or an evening in—just one chair, not such a very big chair. Fires are so comfy and make you want to be nice and say nice things. They're so noddily and sputtery and bless-you-my-childreny. People couldn't row over an open fire, could they? Sometimes they'd talk—when they wanted to—and say the things they wanted, and sometimes they'd stop, and understand each other quite as well—that's a test—oh, and I—I think she'd like her head where—it belonged, and if he should happen to kiss her, there'd be no one but the freight to see, and it would never, never tell. It would be very quiet, and the glow from the fire would be red on their faces, and they would not want another thing in all the world. She'd slip down, I think, to the rug and lean her cheek against his hand and look into the embers, and his other hand would be smoothing her hair as she loved it smoothed. Ah, Teddy, Teddy, wake me! I'm dreaming again, and I mustn't. I mustn't. Bring me back from Spain, Teddy. I mustn't wander there. That's the life I've dreamed of. Isn't it mad? That isn't what's before me."

"No," said I. "No, Ellnor, that isn't what's before you. Have you thought of what you're to look forward to? Listen. Brayton is thirty-nine—nearly forty. He's growing a bit stout, Ellnor. He'll be fat in five years, and he's undeniably bald at the temples. He likes his dinner—he even loves it—and for a couple of hours afterward he's somnolent. I don't like talking about men behind their backs, but this is a time for plain speaking. Brayton wouldn't care for sitting a dux before the fire. That wouldn't amuse him. He'd fall asleep and spoil things. No, he'd be off at his club of an evening. Brayton wouldn't fit into a castle in Spain; he's a bit—solid. Still, he'd be nice to you—if you didn't interfere with him. He'd be proud to have you at the head of his table. You would ornament it, Ellnor, and I dare say you'd get on together in a very friendly, peaceable sort of fashion—in England, not in Spain."

Ellnor dropped her face into her arms, and her bowed shoulders quivered and shook.

"Ah, no, no!" she moaned. "Ah, no, no, Teddy! Not that! I—I can't bear it!"

Then after a long time she looked up once more. Her beautiful face was very flushed, and there were tears wet upon her cheeks.

"It's impossible," said she. "I can't do it. I was mad even to fancy for an instant that I could bear such a life after—after everything."

She pulled the diamond and ruby ring from her finger suddenly and threw it from her as if it burned her hand. It rolled into the gloom beyond the circle of firelight, the three gems flashing as they went.

"Let them say what they will!" cried Lady Ellnor. "Oh, take me away to Spain, Teddy!"

Then I stood up before her and held out my arms.

"Come to Spain, Ellnor!" said I.

Theaters in Shakespeare's Time.

The typical theater in Shakespeare's time was of wood, circular or hexagonal in form, being modeled externally on the general structure of the old amphitheatres for bull and bear baiting. The interior was fashioned after the manner of an inn yard. The pit was scorched by the sun, while the actors were protected by a thatched penthouse. The scenery was supplied by the imagination of the audience, but what was lacking in scenery was made up in noise and bustle, things being kept very lively in that direction. The most numerous class among the audience was roistering apprentices. On the stage and in other parts were fashionable dandies, swashbucklers, writers and actors. These, it is interesting to know, always had free passes. The play lasted two hours on an average, and, considering the noise and the smells which accompanied the performance, one was, it is presumed, not sorry when "the actors dropped on their knees to pray for the queen."

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